

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6682**

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 286

**NOTE PREPARED:** May 1, 2007

**BILL AMENDED:** Apr 9, 2007

**SUBJECT:** Environmental Crimes and Infractions.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Sen. Kenley

**FIRST SPONSOR:** Rep. Dvorak

**BILL STATUS:** Enrolled

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** ☒ **GENERAL**  
☒ **DEDICATED**  
☐ **FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

**Summary of Legislation:** (Amended) This bill makes violations of certain environmental statutes or permits Class D felonies. It makes certain environmental crimes Class C felonies if the crimes result in the death of a person. It requires a court to consider any improper economic benefit received by a defendant, including unjust enrichment, in determining the level of fine to impose. The bill provides that a person who makes a material misstatement in an application for a permit or for certain forms of financial assistance commits a Class D felony. It makes poisoning a water supply or tampering with a water supply with intent to cause serious bodily injury a Class B felony.

The bill allows a prosecuting attorney to appoint the Attorney General or a Deputy Attorney General as a special deputy prosecuting attorney to assist in criminal proceedings related to a violation of environmental law. The bill repeals current provisions establishing offenses that are superseded by this bill. It makes (1) disposing of sewage accumulated in a holding tank or any other container on a watercraft in a manner that the sewage reaches or may reach public waters; or (2) depositing litter, filth, a putrid or unwholesome substance, or the contents of a toilet, catch basin, or grease trap from a watercraft into or upon public waters or the banks of public waters; a Class A infraction instead of a Class B infraction. The bill makes littering a Class A infraction instead of a Class B infraction if refuse is placed or left in, on, or within 100 feet of a body of water that is under the jurisdiction of the (1) Department of Natural Resources; or (2) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The bill requires that a civil judgment of at least \$1,000 be imposed for these Class A infractions.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2007.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** The bill makes certain civil offenders subject to criminal prosecution.

The bill also establishes criminal violations and penalties. The difference that the proposed categories will make in terms of state and local expenditures for incarceration and revenues paid for penalties and fines relative to existing violations and penalties is indeterminable. (Also, see *Explanation of Local Expenditures* below.)

A Class B felony is punishable by a prison term ranging from 6 to 20 years, depending upon mitigating and aggravating circumstances. The average length of stay in Department of Correction (DOC) facilities for all Class B felony offenders is approximately 3.7 years.

A Class C felony is punishable by a prison term ranging from 2 to 8 years, depending upon mitigating and aggravating circumstances. The average length of stay for all Class C felony offenders is approximately two years.

A Class D felony is punishable by a prison term ranging from 6 months to 3 years or reduction to Class A misdemeanor, depending upon mitigating and aggravating circumstances. The average length of stay for all Class D felony offenders is approximately 10 months.

The average expenditure to house an adult offender was \$22,734 in FY 2006. (This does not include the cost of new construction.) If offenders can be housed in existing facilities with no additional staff, the average cost for medical care, food, and clothing is approximately \$1,825 annually, or \$5 daily, per prisoner. The estimated average cost of housing a juvenile in a state juvenile facility was \$63,139.

**Explanation of State Revenues:** *Criminal and Civil Penalties:* If additional court cases occur and fines are collected, revenue to both the Common School Fund and the state General Fund would increase. The maximum fine for a Class D felony is \$10,000, \$10,000 for a Class B felony, and \$5,000 for a Class A misdemeanor. Criminal fines are deposited in the Common School Fund.

If the case is filed in a circuit, superior, or county court, 70% of the \$120 criminal costs fee that is assessed and collected when a guilty verdict is entered would be deposited in the state General Fund. If the case is filed in a city or town court, 55% of the fee would be deposited in the state General Fund. In addition, some or all of the judicial salaries fee (\$15), the public defense administration fee (\$3), the court administration fee (\$2), the judicial insurance adjustment fee (\$1), and the DNA sample processing fee (\$1) are deposited into the state General Fund.

The court may also order a person to pay a fine of at least \$5,000 and not more than \$50,000 for each day of violation. If the person has a prior unrelated conviction for an offense that may be punished as a felony, a fine of not more than \$100,000 for each day of violation may be imposed. In determining the amount of a fine imposed for a violation, the court must consider any improper economic benefit, including unjust enrichment, received by the defendant as a result of the unlawful conduct.

(Revised) *Class D Felonies:* A person who knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly violates the terms of a law or permit issued by IDEM relating to air pollution control, water pollution control, solid or hazardous waste, the operation of an underground storage tank, or air pollution control, and discharges a contaminant; if the discharge results in a substantial risk of serious bodily injury; serious bodily injury to an individual; the death of a vertebrate animal; or damage to the environment that renders the environment unfit for human or vertebrate animal life, or causes damage to an endangered, an at-risk, or a threatened species; commits a Class D felony. However, the offense is a Class C felony if it results in the death of another person.

A person who knowingly or intentionally violates the terms of a law or permit issued by IDEM relating to state regulated wetlands commits a Class D felony.

It is a defense to a prosecution that the person did not know and could not reasonably have been expected to know that the contaminant released into the air was capable of causing the above results.

A person who, with intent to defraud, knowingly or intentionally makes a material misstatement in connection with an application for a permit, loan, or other financial assistance from the Wastewater Revolving Loan Program, the Environmental Remediation Revolving Loan Program, Drinking Water Revolving Loan Program, Waste Tire Management Fund, State Solid Waste Management Fund, or Hazardous Substances Response Trust Fund commits a Class D felony.

A person who, with intent to defraud, knowingly or intentionally makes a material misstatement in connection with a request for payment from the Underground Petroleum Storage Tank Excess Liability Fund commits a Class D felony.

A person who knowingly or intentionally destroys, alters, conceals, or falsely certifies a record that is required to be maintained under the terms of a permit issued by IDEM and may be used to determine the status of compliance commits a Class D felony.

A person who knowingly or intentionally renders inaccurate or inoperative a recording device or a monitoring device required to be maintained by a permit issued by IDEM commits a Class D felony. A person who knowingly or intentionally falsifies testing or monitoring data required by a permit issued by IDEM commits a Class D felony.

*Class A and B Felonies:* A person who, with the intent to cause serious bodily injury, tampers with a water supply; water treatment plant; or water distribution system, commits tampering with a water supply, a Class B felony. However, the offense is a Class A felony if it results in the death of any person. A person who recklessly, knowingly, or intentionally poisons a public water supply commits poisoning, a Class B felony.

*Prosecuting Attorney:* The bill adds that with the consent of the Attorney General, a prosecuting attorney may appoint the Attorney General or a Deputy Attorney General who is licensed to practice law in Indiana as a special deputy prosecuting attorney to assist in any criminal proceeding involving public misconduct. This provision could increase expenses by the Attorney General by an indeterminable amount.

*Class A Infraction:* A person who disposes of sewage accumulated in a holding tank or any other container on a watercraft in a manner that the sewage reaches or may reach public waters, except through a sewage disposal facility, commits a Class A infraction. A judgment of at least \$1,000, which would be deposited in the state General Fund, must be imposed. Any additional revenue is likely to be small.

A person who recklessly, knowingly, or intentionally places or leaves refuse on or within 100 feet of a body of water that is under the jurisdiction of the DNR or the Army Corps of Engineers commits a Class A infraction. A judgment of at least \$1,000, which would be deposited in the state General Fund, must be imposed for each Class A infraction committed.

The amount of revenue that would be deposited in the state General Fund from infractions is likely to be small.

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** *Prosecuting Attorney:* The bill adds that with the consent of the Inspector General, a prosecuting attorney may appoint the Inspector General or a Deputy Inspector General who is licensed to practice law in Indiana as a special deputy prosecuting attorney to assist in any criminal proceeding involving public misconduct. Existing law does not require the consent of the Inspector General. Requiring the Inspector General's consent could affect the number of cases wherein the Inspector General assists in criminal proceedings which could affect local expenditures.

In addition to the above provision, the bill adds that with the consent of the Attorney General, a prosecuting attorney may appoint the Attorney General or a Deputy Attorney General who is licensed to practice law in Indiana as a special deputy prosecuting attorney to assist in any criminal proceeding involving environmental law.

*Criminal Penalties:* If more defendants are detained in county jails prior to their court hearings, local expenditures for jail operations may increase. The average cost per day is approximately \$44.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:** *Criminal Penalties:* If additional court actions occur and a guilty verdict is entered, local governments would receive revenue from the following sources: The county general fund would receive 27% of the \$120 court fee that is assessed in a court of record. Cities and towns maintaining a law enforcement agency that prosecutes at least 50% of its ordinance violations in a court of record may receive 3% of court fees. If the case is filed in a city or town court, 20% of the court fee would be deposited in the county general fund and 25% would be deposited in the city or town general fund. In addition, several additional fees may be collected at the discretion of the judge and depending upon the particular type of criminal case.

**State Agencies Affected:** Department of Correction.

**Local Agencies Affected:** Trial courts, local law enforcement agencies.

**Information Sources:** Indiana Sheriffs' Association, Department of Correction.

**Fiscal Analyst:** Bernadette Bartlett, 317-232-9586.